Midwest Books To Prisoners Community Zine 2023

THE ABOVE ITEM IS NOT PERMITTED. PLEASE RESPOND WITHIN 30 DAYS BY SELECTING ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW AND ATTACHING THIS FORM TO
YOUR RESPONSE. IF NO RESPONSE IN 30 DAYS CONTRABAND WILL BE
DESTROYED.
The inmate has failed to obtain an authorized
BP-331,Authorization to Receive Package or Property.
a publication contains material that a reasonable person would construe as written sole
the purpose of communicating information designed to achieve a breakdown of prisons
through offender disruption such as strikes, riots or security threat group activity.
The above-named publication has been rejected be
Publications" The Warden may reject a publicati
detrimental to the security, good order, or
it might facilitate criminal activity. The
magazine and it is consider a security risk that can be use for escape purposes.
A publication may be rejected only if it is determined detrimental to the security,
good order, or discipline of the institution or if it might facilitate criminal
activity. A publication contains material on the s
detection of criminal schemes by lawful authorities
The mentioned confiscated parcels of mail were either saturate
Mail Privileges between the above individuals have been s
contains information which can be used to instill violence or
hatred among the offender population
Inappropriate or nude pictures,
pictures with inappropriate gestures
All incoming general correspondence, env
rejected if it is anything other than wh
lipstick, fragrance, tape, markers, cra
teaches or advocates illegal activity, disruption, or behavic
is determined by the Warden/Superintendent, to interfere w
is determined by the Warden/Superintendent, for any reas
relates to contract that the offender is asked
If a publication is denied, you may submit a writt
appeal to the Warden/Superintenden
within 10 days of the decision.
Items with marker, crayon, highlighte
metallic ink, glue, whiteout, stickers
DISPOSITION OF NON-DELIVERED ITEM(S)
OFFENDER SIGNATURE
SIGNED UNDER PROTEST
Item held at offender's request for ICE review
SIGN AND RE
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WE OUT HERE

Showing Love & Solidarity with People Inside Cook County Jail Amidst Worsening Conditions

Running Down The Walls 2022 5K Marathon and Punk Show to support Political Prisoners

Alan Piwowar

Welcome to the 2023 issue of our Community Zine! This collaboration is an effort to forge bridges of solidarity through their walls and razor wires. We work to undermine the system's cruel calculus of censorship and repression by sharing these contributions from incarcerated artists and authors and by sending books and other reading materials. This isn't charity or service: we've been there, we know that the way their "justice" works, any one of us could be next. Our liberation is bound together like a good book. We work towards the day that all of us will be free. Let's give it everything we got to make sure that day comes sooner than later. #FreeThemAll!

CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEXT ZINE!
Accepting all submissions for the next one: art, poetry, essays, fiction, nonfiction, comedic comic strips or bitter rantings, whatever you're into and want to share with the world! Please specify if you would like your full name and address listed or if you would like to use an alias. Also send us addresses to any family or friends you would like us to send a copy when it's printed.

WORK WITH MIDWEST BOOKS!
We are an all-volunteer organization always looking for help andideas We meet every single Saturday at Noon to pack books and respond to requests: we'd love to see you there!

books to MIDWEST prisoners

Midwest Books to Prisoners is an all-volunteer 501 (c) (3) not for profit organization based in Chicago. Since 2004 we have been accepting requests from any and all incarcerated people and mailing them reading material free of charge.

If you or a loved one would like to request reading material, you can contact us via snail mail at:

Midwest Books to Prisoners
1321 N. Milwaukee Ave PMB #460
Chicago, IL 60622

or find us on the net at:

www.MidwestBooksToPrisoners.org
Email: midwestb2p@gmail.com
Twitter: @midwestbooks2p
Instagram: @midwestbooks2p
Facebook: facebook.com/mwb2p

FUNDING:
Since the beginning of the pandemic, the number of requests we receive has quadrupled. By donating just a few dollars, you can help pay for postage costs which allow us to continue to provide books and other print media to incarcerated people free of charge.

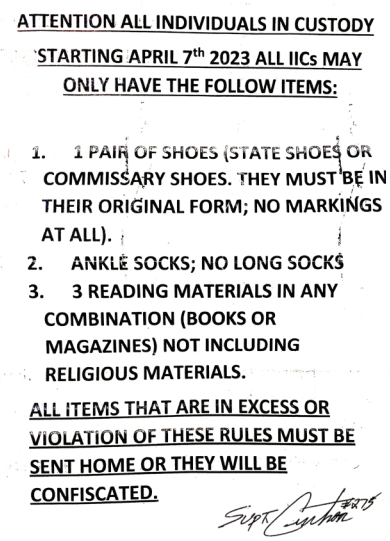
DONATING BOOKS:
We accept fiction, nonfiction, graphic novels, textbooks, magazines, art books, zines, poetry, coloring books, or anything else. No spiral bound or leather-covers. Must be "new-ish" (mailroom guards are tripping about stains and stickers).

The Lingering Mail Banning Threat At CCJ: A Predatory Tool Of Surveillance and Profit that Must Be Stopped

In recent months, Administrators at Cook County Jail have escalated their repressive campaign against free speech and due process rights by enforcing extreme limitations on the amounts of information and reading materials our community members locked inside can have in their possession. Attorneys are now prohibited from bringing in any papers whatsoever during legal visits, denying people access to the evidence they need to fight their case. Guards are going cell to cell stealing people's reading materials enforcing a harsh 3 book limit while cracking down in the mailroom with an increase of petty rejections for books with "stains", "saturation", "crinkled pages", etc. There are no libraries at CCJ and no budget for books or legal materials, but they're pumping millions into restrictive tablets with expensive "email" functionality. These alarm bells demonstrate how they're following the shameful nationwide trend of censorship, privatization and digitization.

In February 2023, Sheriff Tom Dart worked with WGN9 to release a five minute copaganda video showing mail guards inspecting stacks of letters, blaming mail and books for the rise in overdose deaths. Beginning with the headline "it's a new war on drugs inside Cook County Jail", it's more of the same failed fear and misinfo pushing criminalization and restrictions when what is actually needed is resources, treatment, and freedom. In the video, Tom Dart pledged that "we will never get rid of mail altogether", but they are already doing way too much: it's bad enough you already can't get newspapers or hardcover books, and the petty rejections are only increasing. In many jails and prisons where tablets are introduced with alternative electronic messaging and visits, prison systems end up terminating physical mail and visits: but this is Chicago, and we aren't going for that here without a fight. Action needs to be taken to defend this ongoing destruction of rights, and prevent CCJ from a blanket ban on physical mail or books.

"3 Book Rule "and Massive Book Shakedowns: After the Kroger v. Dart lawsuit challenging the 3-book rule was denied by the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals last April, CCJ administrators wasted no time in enforcing this draconian limit by going cell to cell to steal "extra" books. Many legal books have been confiscated or destroyed, as well as other personal possessions such as family photos and artwork. Supposedly religious books aren't counted towards the limit, and people in Division 6 were told legal books don't count as well. But this is all subject to the personal whims of whatever guard wants to enforce and interpret the rules, with no safeguards protecting legal books and no due process to appeal the confiscation or to send the materials home. The Koger lawsuit was not just a challenge of the 3-book limitation itself, but also the handling of the confiscated books: guards tossed Koger's books without options to send home or choose which books they took. CCJ intentionally repeated this disrespect during the recent shakedowns. Part of the punishment is psychological - they want people to feel the fear and uncertainty that at any given moment, books or anything else you might have can be arbitrarily stolen. But it also is preventing people who often spend months or years in pretrial confinement from preparing a legal defense against one of the most corrupt police and court systems in the country.



ATTENTION ALL INDIVIDUALS IN CUSTODY

STARTING APRIL 7th 2023 ALL IICs MAY ONLY HAVE THE FOLLOW ITEMS:

1. 1 PAIR OF SHOES (STATE SHOES OR COMMISSARY SHOES. THEY MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL FORM; NO MARKINGS AT ALL).
2. ANKLE SOCKS; NO LONG SOCKS
3. 3 READING MATERIALS IN ANY COMBINATION (BOOKS OR MAGAZINES) NOT INCLUDING RELIGIOUS MATERIALS.

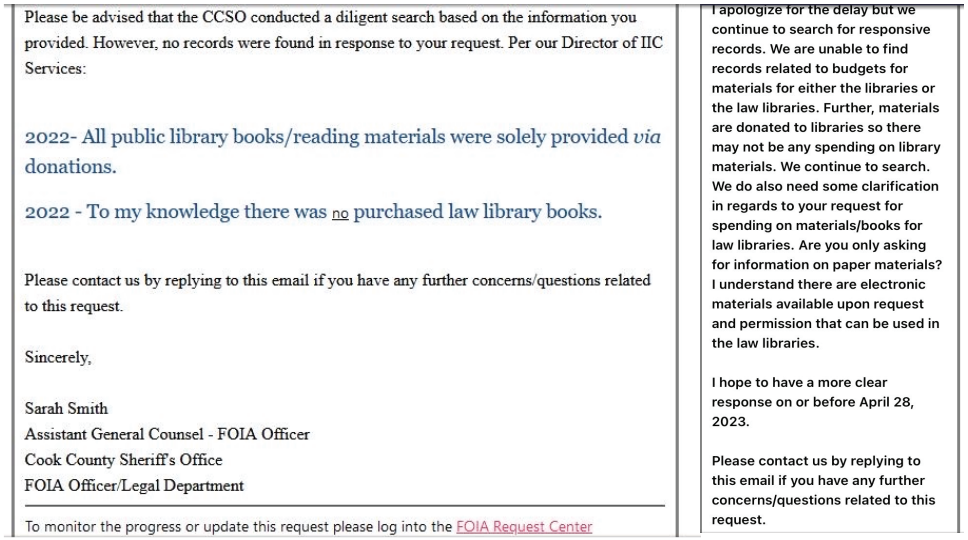
ALL ITEMS THAT ARE IN EXCESS OR VIOLATION OF THESE RULES MUST BE SENT HOME OR THEY WILL BE CONFISCATED.

How does taking away one's reading materials contribute to the "safety and security" or "legitimate penological interests"? Cook County Sheriff says forget what you heard about education and rehabilitation : they argued in Court that that books *"can be used to set fires, as weapons or makeshift body armor, hide contraband, send coded messages between inmates, jam cell doors or locks, cover windows, clog toilets and ventilation systems, cluttering and tripping hazards, and cause disputes between inmates over books"*.

These restrictions violate constitutional rights, have no reasonable penological interest, and fail basic standards of common sense and human decency,. Nevertheless, the Courts always seem to find a way to twist legal interpretations when it suits the ends of the prison system. The four factor test of Turner v. Safley, 482 U.S. 78 (1987) to determine whether a prison restriction should be allowed to override constitutional rights:

1. Whether there is a "valid, rational connection" between the regulation and the legitimate governmental interest used to justify it;
2. Whether there are alternative means for the prisoner to exercise the right at issue;
3. The impact that the desired accommodation will have on guards, other inmates, and prison resources ;
4. The presence or absence of "ready alternatives," where the presence of ready alternatives make it more likely that a regulation is unreasonable, while the absence make it less likely that the regulation is unreasonable.

CCJ did not ban religious materials because that would be an infringement on a person's religious rights, fought in cases like Cooper v. Pate, 378 U.S. 546 (1964), Cruz v. Beto, 405 U.S. 319 (1972), and Sostre v. McGinnis. A prison regulation that infringes on inmates' constitutional rights therefore is valid only if it is "reasonably related to legitimate penological interests." Turner, 482 U.S. at 88, 107 S.Ct. 2254. "[A] regulation cannot be sustained where the logical connection between the regulation and the asserted goal is so remote as to render the policy arbitrary or irrational." Id. at 89, 107 S.Ct. 2254. What is the valid rationality of the book policy when religious books can be unlimited but other materials are severely constricted? Do we have to declare a new religion that worships the law so individuals can have materials to prepare their cases?



Please be advised that the CCSO conducted a diligent search based on the information you provided. However, no records were found in response to your request. Per our Director of IIC Services:

2022- All public library books/reading materials were solely provided *via* donations.

2022 - To my knowledge there was no purchased law library books.

Please contact us by replying to this email if you have any further concerns/questions related to this request.

Sincerely,

Sarah Smith
Assistant General Counsel - FOIA Officer
Cook County Sheriff's Office
FOIA Officer/Legal Department

To monitor the progress or update this request please log into the FOIA Request Center

I apologize for the delay but we continue to search for responsive records. We are unable to find records related to budgets for materials for either the libraries or the law libraries. Further, materials are donated to libraries so there may not be any spending on library materials. We continue to search. We do also need some clarification in regards to your request for spending on materials/books for law libraries. Are you only asking for information on paper materials? I understand there are electronic materials available upon request and permission that can be used in the law libraries.

I hope to have a more clear response on or before April 28, 2023.

Please contact us by replying to this email if you have any further concerns/questions related to this request.

Are there alternative means to receive enough reading materials in CCJ? Absolutely not. Our recent FOIA request shows that there was $0 spending on library and law library reading materials at Cook County Jail in the year 2022. All books were sent in "by donation", so from family members and groups like ours. As for access to the "law library", you have to fill out a request form specifying your query, and hope that a few weeks later the five pages of printouts you get back will be enough to prepare your case.

The irrational stripping away of the possessions of community members locked up has caused a huge divide amongst guards and the people they harm. Reading materials encourage a healthier environment and book programs like Midwest Books To Prisoners give indigent people inside the ability to obtain reading materials free of charge, removing some financial burden put on the individuals detained in CCJ as well as the burden put on their families who are trying to help maintain the mental health of people living in uninhabitable living conditions.

The Digitization Creep: After just a few months of CCJ distributing over 3000 tablets, they enabled the GTL "Telmate Getting Out" app with electronic "email" functionality. When these prison profiteers come around, often physical mail and visits are phased out and replaced with these heavily restricted, and expensive texting services.

Meet Jon Logan CEO of Smart Communications. $500,000 PPP loans, flaunting his gaudy cars and suits. "Grab the world by the pussy" keychain

Smart Communications, Securus, TextBehind, Pigeonly, Global Tel-Link and more: the lucrative business of mail scanning is spreading rampantly often without constitutional considerations, congressional oversight, or public comment. It happened in half the state prison systems, several federal prisons, and hundreds of local jails.

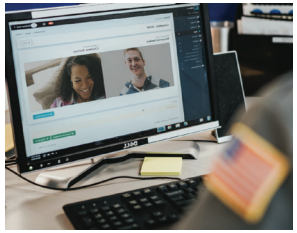
Authorities claim these outsourced mail security services are necessary to prevent drugs from being sent in, but are unable to show evidence it works (ie reports after five years of SmartCommunications digitizing the entire PA DOC's mail, drugs still proliferate).

While people need unrestricted access to technology and the internet, this ain't it. All kinds of problems with these tablets replacing physical mail. The costs: they're nickel and diming the incarcerated for basic text and phone services that would otherwise be nearly free if it weren't run by profiteering contractors. The quality is trash: margins clipped, pages out of order, limits on quantity or sizes, etc. Unlike physical mail, if you ever get transferred to another institution you may lose all your mail stored on the tablets. Availability is also an issue, equipment breaks, is often unavailable during lockdowns, and access can be revoked for discipline as if communication is a privilege not a right.

Expanding the Panopticon: There are other selling points that make it attractive to prison administrators: surveillance and data collection - not only storing all communications in searchable databases for police, but they also spy on contacts they correspond with - expanding the carceral panopticon not only to those captive in their dungeons, but to the rest of us in the so-called free world!

CIDNET, a "communications company" similar to Securus, Smart Communications, and GTL, describes themselves as "a social platform, an investigative monitoring tool, and a communications infrastructure, depending on who you are". In CIDNETs 2021 catalog, they advertise their "features" for staff as revenue and monitoring:

"Mail cues are monetized by many of our clients, and they can be a significant source of additional funding for your facility. Monitoring tools: The Cidnet Intelligence Suite is a treasure trove of tools that help facilities solve more cases and prevent future crimes. These tools are designed to continuously monitor large amounts of inmate communications data, so corrections staff don't have to. Time previously spent randomly monitoring inmate communications will transition to time spent analyzing actionable intelligence that the system provides. "

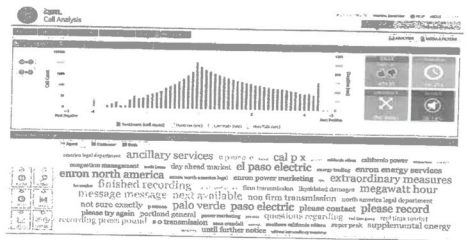


Smart Communications highlighting their surveillance capabilities:

"authorized staff with the ability to monitor and review all electronic messages and attachments sent through the system, except those items that are deemed privileged under law (i.e. attorney/client confidentiality). We will maintain a record of all electronic messages sent through the SmartInmate system for a period of seven years from the time the message was sent. SmartInmate has many built-in investigative features that make the system an invaluable intelligence-gathering, crime solving and powerful crime prevention tool. For example, SmartInmate can automatically monitor and send instant notifications when messages containing investigator-defined keywords or names are transmitted, or inmates being shadowed under investigation send or receive messages or connect with a new public user. Furthermore, SmartInmate messages are fully keyword searchable. Keywords are highlighted in the search results to allow investigators to quickly locate content of interest. SmartInmate also collects statistics, data and information on public users in the community that are in communication with inmates at your agency. Information such as connected inmates, phone numbers, IP-addresses, email addresses, credit card and bank information, GPS locations, devices used and more".

GTL is also spying on people who dare use their app to communicate with loved ones:

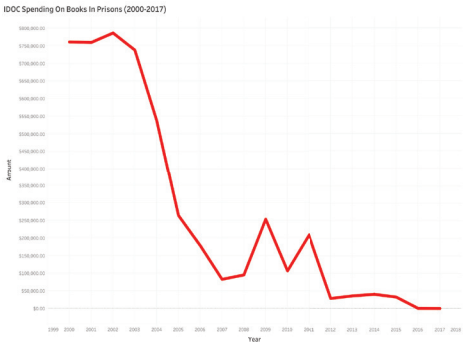
"Call IQ application will alert you via email if a peron utter a specific phrase or mentions a certain topic during a call... Calls with greater fluctuation in sentiment or emotion can lead investigators to calls where the inmate or called party shows signs of stress. .. Location IQ uses powerful and accurate Carrier Tower and GPS location based services to access a called party's location using GPS, offering both latitude/longitude coordinates and proximity to the given facility... "



Rather than stopping the flow of contraband, these prison administrators are conspiring with third party profiteers to monitor, censor, slow and obstruct the mail, narrowing the form and content of communications allowed to only these dystopian corporate sandboxes. Instead of addressing the root causes of addiction, poverty and criminalization, they're accusing the entire planet of being a criminal entity trying to smuggle drugs into prison, blaming mail, books and everyone else except for the people profiting from the cycle of incarceration. We're not going for it! ***Sheriff Tom Dart, leave the mail alone!***

Illinois Prison System Spent Less Than $300 On Books Last Year

Vicki White, president of Chicago Books to Women in Prison, reads a letter sent from an incarcerated woman to the organization, which donates books to women in prisons in Illinois and across the country. *Lee V. Gaines / Illinois Newsroom*



From: "Meikle, Maggie" <Maggie.Meikle@Illinois.gov>
To: "Meikle, Maggie" <Maggie.Meikle@Illinois.gov>
Date: 4/26/2023 1:50:40 PM
Subject: [External] FOIA REQUEST

Maggie,

As a total, we spent $2,461,521.30 on reading materials/books in libraries. This includes legal law libraries. Each facility receives monthly online legal updates. Books are purchased as they are needed. There is no set budget for these items. We order and purchase as needed.

James Deen
Budget & Finance
Illinois Department of Corrections

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For all the complaints we've received about the lack of books within Illinois DOC, we were surprised to receive a FOIA response that claims IDOC spent $2.5 million on material/books at prison libraries this year. A stunning reverxal of this downwords trend - we are very skeptical that the money is actually going towards books!

Pretrial Fairness Act Paused Pending IL Supreme Court Ruling

Having passed the Pretrial Fairness Act in January 2021, Illinois was set to become the first state to abolish money bail and end wealth-based discrimination in bond consideration. Implementation had two years to prepare and was about to go into effect January 1st 2023: many thousands of people being held pretrial simply for not being able to afford the bail amount were about to have a good chance at bond reconsideration - until prosecutors and sheriffs filed frivolous lawsuits and in literally the last week got Kankakee County judge Thomas W. Cunningham to find the bill unconstitutional. Appeals have been filed, oral arguments heard, and an Illinois Supreme Court ruling is expected anytime.

Right-wing forces had waged a dirty copaganda disinfo campaign complete with millions spent pumping out fake newspapers to spread lies about the PFA and scare people of an imminent murderous "purge" to build astroturf momentum to stop the bill. While it shamefully succeeded in temporarily pausing the bill's implementation - keeping thousands of non-convicted people behind bars for the crime of not being able to afford bail - their legal argument is considered a flimsy delay tactic, and it is expected that the IL Supreme Court will likely rule in favor of the constitutionality of the bill. We may still get a fair shake so stay tuned!

The appeals and amicus briefs present evidence, sound legal arguments and social science research refuting the false premises underlying the Circuit Court's ruling. The passage of the PFA was a years-long achievement by hundreds of organizations in a robust and diverse movement. Despite what the reactionary police unions and right-wing billionaires want you to believe, the people of Illinois demand pretrial justice. End Money Bond Now!

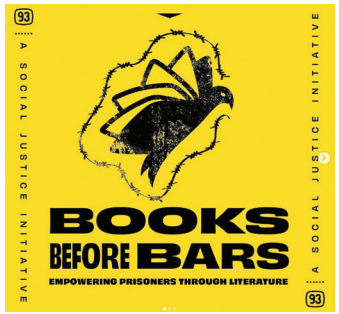
Chicago Defeats Cop/Fascist/Billionaire-Backed Paul Vallas

Narrowly ducked a right-wing coup - differing visions of the future of Chicago could not have been more clear. Paul Vallas ran as a Democrat, but in actuality was aligned with right-wing fascists, billionaires, and the reactionary police union. Like so many other who don't even live in Chicago, Vallas played on people's fears and prejudices by hyping national stereotypes about rampant crime in order to justify hardcore tough-on-crime positions. Backed by the notorious Fraternal Order of Police and their racist Jan 6er president John Catanzara, he attacked the Pretrial Fairness Act (keeping people in jail for not having enough bail money), defended police foot chase policies (which resulted in the CPD murder of Adam Toledo in 2020), and otherwise promised to take the gloves off and unleash the already notoriously murderous and brutal Chicago Police Department on the city.

Chicago's new mayor Brandon Johnson, the former Cook County Commissioner and a former public school teacher, supported community-focused holistic approaches to public safety by advocating for Treatment not Trauma and the Peace Book Ordinance while pledging to close ShotSpotter and the red light cameras. Although many were disappointed to hear Brandon backtrack on calls to Defund the Police (promising to hire 200 more detectives), he brought up on the debate stage the names of those murdered by the CPD and the horrific legacy of torture by Jon Burge and others. We know electoral politics won't bring about the necessary abolition of these carceral systems. But as voting results confirm, it is clear that Brandon Johnson's vision of public safety resonated with most Chicagoans and in particular those who live in neighborhoods most affected by crime.

Books Before Bars: Vic Mensa's Cannabis Company 93 Boyz Partners With Literacy Initiative For Prison Reform

Chicago-based rapper, actor and activist Vic Mensa and his brand, 93 Boyz, the first Black-owned and led cannabis company in Illinois, have partnered with Books Before Bars, a non-profit organization dedicated to supplying books to underprivileged prison libraries in Illinois. This partnership aims to provide inmates with potentially transformative resources, offering a chance for personal growth and development.



At the heart of 93 Boyz's mission is a commitment to reinvest in communities and individuals historically and disproportionately impacted by outdated cannabis laws, prejudices, and assumptions. This initiative aims to elevate underserved communities while also providing some of the highest-quality cannabis products in the state.

Vic Mensa shared his thoughts on the development and launch of 93 Boyz, stating, "Selling weed was my first hustle. It taught me work ethic, entrepreneurship, and funded all of my first music projects... The war on drugs has had a devastating impact on my community, and yet our representation in the cannabis industry is less than 2%. 93BOYZ is changing that narrative while combining high quality, tastemaker weed with socially conscious initiatives."

In a move towards environmental sustainability, 93 Boyz has also teamed up with aeroponic cannabis cultivator aeriz to deliver eco-friendly products from plant to person. The product line features premium flower eighths, premium prerolls, and strain-specific vape cartridges, offering a variety of options from sativa to indica and custom hybrid blends.

Furthermore, 93 Boyz was established in collaboration with SaveMoneySaveLife, a non-profit organization founded by Mensa that seeks to uplift and empower BIPOC individuals through experiences integrating contemporary cultural art, traditional knowledge, and community service. With its specific focus on prison reform and equity in the cannabis industry, 93 Boyz aims to make a meaningful impact.

The first initiative, Books Before Bars, focuses on providing literature to incarcerated individuals. The program's book list includes titles such as "The New Jim Crow," "The Autobiography of Malcolm X," "A New Earth," "The Power of Now," "Black Skin White Masks," "Revolutionary Suicide," and others intended to help inmates find relief and mental freedom during their incarceration.

Mensa elaborated on the purpose of Books Before Bars: "The goal is to bring liberation and freedom to people who are incarcerated through literature because I believe strongly that when you change your inner reality, you begin to influence your external reality."

If you have a loved one who is currently incarcerated, send their mailing info to BooksBeforeBars@93boys.com and we'll ship them a selection of books from a reading list curated by 93 Boyz

Midwest Books to Prisoners Announces Free Customized Newsletters Subscriptions and Legal Resources Service

This new service free to incarcerated people is addressing the inhumanity that incarcerated people simply do not have access to the way that most people access information on this planet - the Internet. Shamefully, some accept as a matter-of-course that they should be denied computers and smartphones, so they can't doomscroll with the rest of us. But it ain't right that you have to fight, bang on doors and file a dozen grievances just to get a few hours a week on some "electronic law library" that has basically nothing but the rulings and is never updated. It's getting worse: these past few years, mailroom cops are going after books and physical mail.

We're pushing back - with zines. For months, we've been quietly testing out an internet newsletter and legal resource service. Now it's ready for public launch: help us forge a paper-and-ink bridge through the walls and razor fences to share information that would be otherwise unavailable!

Newsletters are individually customized based on subscriber's interests or specific sources: our system automatically retrieves content from websites, blogs, social media, producing a nicely formatted personalized zine mailed out every few weeks. Common requests are legal/prison news, tattoo, sports, politics, tech, business, Its Going Down, specific Twitter feeds, etc.

Legal resources are also available on request. We have a large collection of guides, pamphlet, excerpts from law books, and other materials on a wide variety of legal issues available for free. Also available is a legal updates zine with current information scraped from multiple sources.

Incarcerated people can request these resources by writing to our PO Box: alternatively, people can make a request on behalf of their loved ones by submitting a form on our website. If any other interested prisoner support group is interested in utilizing these tools we've built, contact us.

Legal Resources

We will send you legal materials upon REQUEST BY CHAPTER and/or TOPIC. (We are not able to provide legal advice or representation). PLEASE REQUEST and prioritize 3-5 chapters/topics at a time. Chapters/topics vary in size, & we are limited to mailing stuff in based on your location and post office guidelines. Also available: newsletter subscription with current articles from Solitary Watch, Prison Policy, and more.

Columbia Jailhouse Lawyers Manual

Ch 1: How to Use the JLM
Ch 2: Introduction to Legal Research
Ch 3: Your Right to Learn the Law & Go to Court
Ch 4: How to Find a Lawyer
Ch 5: Choosing a Court and a Lawsuit
Ch 6: An Introduction to Legal Documents
Ch 7: Freedom of Information
Ch 8: Obtaining Information to Prepare Your Case: The Process of Discovery
Ch 9: Appealing Your Conviction or Sentence
Ch 10: Applying for Re-Sentencing for Drug Offenses
Ch 11: Using Post-Conviction DNA testing to Attack Your Conviction or Sentence
Ch 12: Appealing Your Conviction Based on Ineffective Assistance of Counsel
Ch 13: Federal Habeas Corpus
Ch 14: The Prison Litigation Reform Act
Ch 15: Inmate Grievance Procedures
Ch 16: Using 42 U.S.C. § 1983 to Obtain Relief from Violations of Federal Law & Civil Rights
Ch 17: The State's Duty to Protect You and Your Property: Tort Actions
Ch 18: Your Rights At Prison Disciplinary Proceedings
Ch 19: Your Right to Communicate with the Outside World
Ch 20: Using Article 440 if the New York Criminal Procedure Law to Attack Your Unfair Conviction or Illegal Sentence
Ch 21: State Habeas Corpus: FL, NY & MI
Ch 22: How to Challenge Administrative Decisions Using Article 78 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules
Ch 23: Your Right to Adequate Medical Care
Ch 24: Your Right to be Free from Assault by Prison Guards and Other Incarcerated People
Ch 25: Your Right to be Free from Illegal Body Searches
Ch 26: Infectious Diseases: AIDS, Hepatitis, Tuberculosis, and MRSA in Prison
Ch 27: Religious Freedom in Prison
Ch 28: Rights of Incarcerated People with Disabilities
Ch 29: Special Issues for Incarcerated People with Mental Illness
Ch 30: Special Information LGBTQI+ People
Ch 31: Security Classification and Gang Validation
Ch 32: Parole
Ch 33: Rights of Incarcerated Parents
Ch 34: The Rights of Pretrial Detainees
Ch 35: Getting Out Early: Conditional and Early Release
Ch 36: Special Considerations for Sex Offenders
Ch 37: Rights Upon Release
Ch 38: Rights of Youth in Prison
Ch 39: Temporary Release Programs
Ch 40: Plea Bargaining
Ch 41: Special Issues of Incarcerated Women
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Appendix I: Addresses of Federal Courts & New York State Prisons and Their Respective Federal Judicial Districts
Appendix II: New York State: Filing Instructions & Addresses of New York State Courts
Appendix III: Addresses of New York District Attorneys
Appendix IV: Directory of Legal and Social Services for Incarcerated People
Appendix V: Definitions of Words Used in the JLM
Appendix VI: Definitions of Latin Words Used in the JLM
Constitutional Rights of Prisoners 2010
Ch. 1 - An Overview of the Judicial System
Ch. 2 - Administrative Law
Ch. 3 - Use of Force; Use of Corporal Punishment to Enforce Prison Discipline
Ch. 4 - Prisoners' Rights to Visitation/Association; Searches
Ch. 5 - Prisoners' Rights to Use of the Mail, Internet and Telephone
Ch. 6 - Isolated Confinement—"The Hole" and Administrative Segregation
Ch. 7 - Religion in Prison
Ch. 8 - Legal Services
Ch. 9 - Prisoner Disciplinary Proceedings
Ch. 10 - Right to Rehabilitation Programs, Right to Medical Aid, and Right to Life
Ch. 11 - Additional Litigation
Ch. 12 - Parole & Probation
Ch. 13 - Litigation against Government and Individuals
ch. 14 - The Prison Litigation Reform Act
ch. 15 - Selected Federal Statutes Affecting Prisoners

OTHER TOPICS

1. Disciplinary self help
2. Habeas ineffective assistance of counsel
3. Habeas prosecutorial misconduct
4. Commutation Petition-a guide for incarcerated people and their loved ones
5. Effective communication for commutations: a teacher's guide
6. Status of & protections for incarcerated persons under federal labor laws and constitutional rights

ILLINOIS

7.Illinois Handbook on Briefs and Oral Arguments
8. Illinois attorney post conviction manual
9. Pretrial Fairness implication task force flow charts and materials

YOUTH

10. CLBB_White_Paper_on_the_Science_of_Late_Adolescence
11. Children Are Different": Implicit Bias, Rehabilitation, & the "New" Juvenile Jurisprudence
12. Miranda-Analysis for Juvenile statements (1 pager)
13. Trial manual for defense Attorneys-in-Juvenile-Delinquency-Cases
14. Juvenile False Confessions

GEORGETOWN WRITING CENTER

15. Legal Analysis
16. Assessing Legal Authority
17. Persuasive Writing
18. Bluebook Citation
19. Legal Research

ASSORTED:

20. Guide for Attorneys Recruited to Represent Plaintiffs in Section 1983 Cases
21. Handbook for the wrongfully convicted part 1
22. Handbook for the wrongfully convicted part 2
23. Criminal law concepts salerno
24. Martin Sostre letters from prison
25. How to use the law library
26. How to file petition writ of certiorari
27. 20 USC federal habeas corpus
28. Anarchist Litigation for dummies + understanding case law legal writing
29. Martin sostre in court
30. The CPR compilation of quotes and cites
31. HRDC v. Baxter County, Arkansas Breif Amici Curiae- successful defeat of postcard only rule for legal info

ILLINOIS SPECIFIC CASES

Office of the State Appellate Defender Criminal Law Handbook by Chapter The Illinois Handbook of Criminal Law Decisions contains summaries of significant decisions. The Handbook is organized by topic, and decision, summaries are added as cases are decided. Due to large page count one Part, counts as a chapter.

CH 01 Accountability
CH 02 Appeal
CH 03 Armed Violence
CH 04 Arson
CH 05 Attempt
CH 06 Bail
CH 07 Battery, Assault, Stalking Offenses
CH 08 Burglary and Residential Burglary
CH 09 Collateral Remedies
CH 10 Confessions
CH 11 Conspiracy and Solicitation
CH 12 Contempt of Court
CH 13 Controlled Substances
Ch 14 Counsel Part A: (Right to Counsel, Waiver of Counsel , Attorney Fees and Costs , Effective Assistance of Counsel)
Ch 14 Counsel Part B: (Reasonable Assistance and Other Standards, Conflict of Interest, Where Lawyer's Competency is Challenged)
CH 15 Discovery
CH 16 Disorderly, Escape, Resisting & Obstructing Offenses
CH 17 Double Jeopardy
CH 18 Entrapment
Ch 19 EVIDENCE. Part A: (Right to Present Evidence, Relevant Evidence, Limited and Curative Admissibility, Direct and Circumstantial Evidence, Demonstrative and Physical (Real) Evidence, Re-opening Evidence, Rebuttal, Surrebuttal, Objections and Offers of Proof, Evidence of Character, Evidence of Escape, Flight, Tampering with Evidence and Witnesses, Out of Court Statements Generally)
Ch19 EVIDENCE. Part B: (Admissions: Exculpatory and False Exculpatory Statements, Co-Conspirator Statements, Dying Declarations, Spontaneous Declarations; Corroborative Complaints; Statements Under 725 ILCS 5/115-10,Prior Inconsistent Statements, Prior Consistent Statements,Prior Statements of Identification,Testimony From Prior Proceedings, Statements Against Penal Interest, Statements Concerning State of Mind, Statements to Treating Physicians)
Ch19 EVIDENCE. Part C: (Judicial Notice, Opinion Testimony, Other Crimes Evidence)
Ch19 EVIDENCE. Part D: (Photographs, Privileged Communications, Scientific Evidence, Writings)
CH 20 Extradition
CH 21 Fitness To Stand Trial
CH 22 Forcible Felonies
CH 23 Forgery
CH 24 Guilty Pleas
CH 25 Home Invasion
CH 26 Homicide
CH 27 Identification
CH 28 Immunity
CH 29 Indictments, Information, Complaints
CH 30 Insanity - Mentally Ill - Intoxication
CH 31 Judge
Ch 32 JURY. Part A: (Right to Jury Trial, Number of Jurors - Unanimous Verdicts, Waiver of Jury, Jury Selection, Impartial Jury, Communication with Jury; Jury Examination of Evidence)
Ch 32 JURY. Part B: (Sequestration of Jury, Instructions to Jury, Polling of Jury)
CH 33 Juvenile Proceedings
CH 34 Kidnapping, Unlawful Restraint & Related Offenses
CH 35 Obscenity
CH 36 Parole, Pardons and Prisoners' Rights
CH 37 Perjury
CH 38 Preliminary Hearing
CH 39 Probation, Periodic Imprisonment, Conditional Discharge and Supervision
of the Noncitizens' Extraterritorial Constitution
CH 40 Prosecutor
CH 41 Reasonable Doubt
CH 42 Robbery
Ch 43 SEARCH AND SEIZURE. PART A: (General Principles, Searches)
Ch 43 SEARCH AND SEIZURE. PART B: (Seizure,Probable Cause - Factors)
Ch 43 SEARCH AND SEIZURE. PART C: (Warrants – Issuance and Execution, Motor Vehicle Searches)
Ch 43 SEARCH AND SEIZURE. PART D: (Searches and Seizures in Sensitive Areas, Suppression Motions and Hearings, Pretextual Stops and Searches)
Ch44 SENTENCING Part A: (Construction and Validity of Statutes, Change in Sentencing Provision; Right to Election, Sentencing Hearing-Sentencing Factors, Proper and Improper, Double Enhancement; Factors Inherent in the Offense, Statement of Reasons for the Sentence
Ch44 SENTENCING Part B: (Restitution, Assessments, and Forfeitures, Drug Abuse Treatment, Consecutive Sentences, Other Types of Enhanced or Extended Sentences, Delay in Execution of Sentence, Modification of Sentence by Trial Judge, Misapprehension of Range; Unauthorized Sentences; Void/Voidable, Excessive Sentences,Disparity in Sentences, Sentence Credit, Truth-In-Sentencing--Resentencing, Appellate Concerns Generally)
CH 45 Sex Offenses
CH 46 Speedy Trial
CH 47 Statutes
CH 48 Theft And Other Property Offenses CH 49 Traffic Offenses
CH 50 Trial Joinder And Severance
CH 51 Trial Procedures
CH 52 Venue and Jurisdiction
CH 53 Verdicts
CH 54 Waiver - Plain Error - Harmless Error
CH 55 Weapons
CH 56 Witness

Monthly Criminal Law Digest

Office of the State Appellate Defender The monthly digest contains summaries of significant decisions by Illinois reviewing courts and the United States Supreme Court for each month, organized by topic. Newer editions usually come out late. We currently have the monthly digest for the months of August 2021 to the current date. Request by month.

2021: Jackson County, IN: Joshua McLemore murdered by guards who kept him naked and malnourished in solitary for weeks

#PRISONER LIVES MATTER

4/13/23: Fulton County, GA: Lashawn Thompson "Eaten Alive by Insects" in Lice and Bed Bug Infested Cell

2/15/23: Walker County, Alabama: Guards murdered Anthony Don Mitchell by holding him in the kitchen freezer

Government Can't Say How Many People Die in U.S. Jails and Prisons

Erica Bryant Associate Director of Writing

Mar 16, 2022

3/6/23: Henrico County, VA: Irvo Otieno murdered by large group of guards and medical staff

3/29/23: Ciudad Juárez, Mexico: 39 People Murdered By Fleeing Guards Who Kept Them Caged As Immigration Jail Burns Down

When Force-Feeding Is Torture

After years of litigation, The Nation *and Type Investigations have acquired footage of a force-feeding at a federal prison. It shows treatment that may amount to torture.*

By Aviva Stahl

Illustration by Victor Juhasz.

Police Appear to Have Executed a Cop City Protester in Cold Blood

BY BRANKO MARCETIC

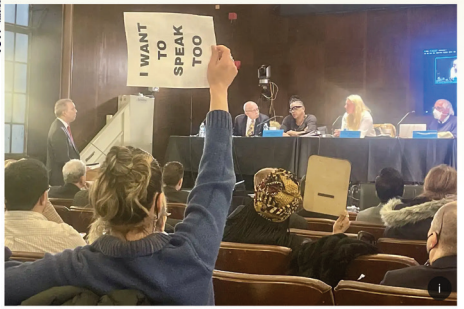
New evidence suggests the official police narrative that the anti–Cop City activist Tortuguita was killed by police after firing on them is a lie. The killing is the product of the domestic "war on terror" and its crackdown on nonviolent activists.

Cook County Jail officer charged with beating inmate using handcuffs over his knuckles

Despite 5 years of mail scanning to keep drugs from Pa. prisons, problems remain

April 17 2023, Pennsylvania Patriot-News

NYC jails oversight body rejects plan to ban mail and packages at Rikers



Matt Katz / Gothamist

New Yorkers put enough pressure on City Council to refuse to bring up a vote on Mayor Adam's proposal to ban physical mail and packages

A Texas Prison Guard Punishes a Woman for Talking About Abortion

Legal experts told The Nation *it's not illegal. But that didn't stop one guard from moving a woman to extreme isolation after sharing sexual health information.*

By Victoria Law

"We are humans back here": As Texas hunger strike wanes, prisoners speak out against solitary confinement

After 21 days, the last of many Texas prisoners to consistently refuse food ended his hunger strike. In letters to The Texas Tribune, two prisoners spoke out on the dire solitary confinement conditions that led them to starve themselves.

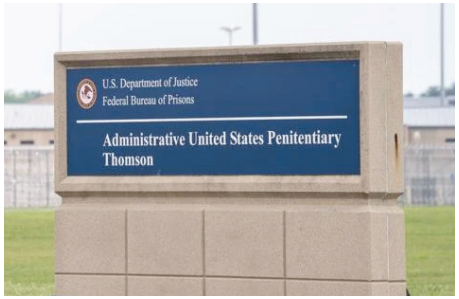
BY JOLIE MCCULLOUGH JAN. 30, 2023 4 PM CENTRAL

COPY LINK REPUBLISH

Cook County Sheriff's correctional officer charged with beating handcuffed inmate

Good Neighbors

Written by Carl, an anonymous USP Thomson survivor



I've been incarcerated since 1988, and have witnessed many cultural changes in the staffing of these federal penitentiaries. When I entered the system, a level of human dignity existed behind these walls. The old school "bulls" recognized our punishment was the loss of liberty for a period of time, not our humanity. Around 2008 the shift towards a tyrannical regime became obvious to many of us around then, and only grew worse over the years. I had nearly forgotten what human dignity was.

Staff have been trained to hate us much like the psychological conditioning the military instills upon soldiers to prepare them for war where the objective is to destroy the enemy both psychologically and physically. The dehumanization of the enemy makes it easier for soldiers to carry out their amoral duties on the battlefield. In 2008, soldiers were leaving the war in the Middle East and finding good paying jobs within corrections, both state and federal. While filling these jobs, us prisoners became the enemy. They took away our jobs; the quality of our food, contact with our family and friends; recreational programs; hobby crafts; and freedom of movement within the facilities. They pushed us into our cells where in these USPs we spend more than half the year locked in our cells 24 hours a day behind bogus security concerns.

Then the BOP implemented the Special Management Unit (SMU) program where men were confined in cages 24 hours a day for years in mind-numbing conditions of confinement. This systematic dehumanization infected the psyche of us felons. The "convict code" (ie respect for respect) was lost. Respect for our geopolitical difference, property, and even human life diminished. We let these tyrants pit us against one another. Things like honor, integrity, and duty have been washed out. And not surprisingly the incidents of violence actually increased: as there is safety in numbers, prisoners embraced the collective bargaining system the gang life provides. Today, the most influential prison gang is the "independent car".

Many prisoners in today's BOP and especially the USPs are struggling with severe PTSD. This isn't simply the result of living in an environment where fellow prisoners attack one another without warning. Excessive force by staff has become commonplace. Staff wear it as a badge of honor - "running team" on a defenseless person. So men find themselves in an unpredictable environment, unable to trust anyone, and nowhere to retreat to. For female prisoners it's even worse - as Congressional hearings revealed vast incidents of staff systematically raping these defenseless woman through coercion and threats. It will take many years and teams of therapists to treat those impacted, both male and female.

So, last year when I heard the new BOP director Colette Peters say at her swearing-in ceremony, "our job is not to make good inmates, it's to make good neighbors", I viewed her as a joke. I completely dismissed any hopes that she would succeed in fulfilling her promises to "humanize and normalize" life in prison. From years of experience, I didn't believe there were any staff left in the BOP who had even a scintilla of respect for a prisoner's humanity. Yet, this year two things transpired that gives me hope that the pendulum might be swinging back towards less-restrictive and oppressive conditions of confinement.

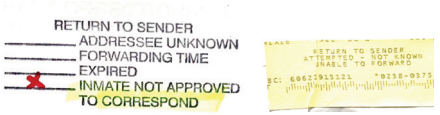
In February, Colette Peters terminated the SMU program - the failed program where conditions were so extreme it drove men insane, resulting in suicidal and homicidal behavior. The mortality rate in the SMU program quickly exceeded anything the BOP had experienced previously, yet it continued the program for over a decade. In a single week, all of us at USP Thomson were put on buses and transferred out to other facilities around the country. We did stop at various truck stops and rest areas so the guards could use the restrooms, get food and drinks and stretch their legs, but for us, we had no food, water, or restroom breaks. The 18 hour bus ride, in full restraints, was hell - but every man toughed it out with a smile on their face.

The week we arrived, the facility had just begun the process of returning to normal operations with rumors floating around that the Director had warned the administration to get up and running or she would bring others in to do it (the deuces have been hit nearly every day since, and we are still up). The staff here for the most part aren't coming to work looking to put the boots on the back of our necks. Now don't get me wrong - the conditions here are deplorable. The facility is in utter disrepair. There's no jobs for 85% of the inmate population. The facility is 30% understaffed, resulting in us being locked in our cells on the weekend. The food, for what small portions we do get, are served cold to us daily at our cells in styrofoam clamshells, and is unpalatable despite the cook's best efforts. These new mattresses (without pillows) are no better to sleep on than yoga mats. We only hit commissary once a month. Recreation and hobbycraft programs haven't come online yet.

It's still hard times. But a little humanity goes a long way in repairing broken spirits and building bridges of communication. This practice of humanity is contagious: I've noticed that inmates (or as the new director refers to us as, "adults in custody") have been reciprocating this behavior. I haven't seen or heard of staff "running team" on a man yet since I arrived. What a concept: treating people with humanity leads to people acting like humans. Crazy, right?

Censorship in the IDOC

by Dennis Rogers Jr



In the twenty years that I have been a captive of the IDOC, the corrupt administration pretty much censors any literature that they know could have a beneficial effect on the way we think or act. The policies they use to enforce these censorships are so vague, it is impossible to combat them.

Anything that promotes unity, free thinking, personal development, or non-mainstream literature can easily be turned around by them simply saying there is a marker or highlighter mark in it, it has a sticker or tape on it, there is a white-out on it or a many of the other fabricated excuse they want.

In the American prison system we captives are equally oppressed. They view all open-minded, like-minded free thinkers as a threat to their crushing grip of control. It may not seem like it but thats only because the numbers vary so much on the amount of blacks, white, asian, and latinos incarcerated. A book about Bruce Lee can be denied because it speaks of his fighting style. A book about Nelson Mandela because he stood up for what was right. A book about the cartels in Mexico or even a WWII history book can be denied for any reason real or fake.

It is nearly impossible to combat these oppressive rules from the inside. Our voices are not loud enough and as soon as we yell we are beaten, abused, locked away from everyone else or transfered. Any right we had to free-thinking was stripped from us the moment we entered these walls. They know the pen is mightier than the sword. Even though they hold the sword to our neck, our eyes are opened as we read books about our past, our heros, our future.

I would personally like to thank everyone in stopping this unjust censorship and all who provide books and other literature to the oppressed prison populations.

Survey and Zine Project Against Prison Censorship

Midwest Books to Prisoners part of an abolitionist coalition against prison censorship and book banning. One of our first projects is a zine and survey, sharing what we know, publish submissions from those on the front lines, and asking for survey responses to help understand the situation and develop strategies. Midwest Books to Prisoners sent 1200 zines and surveys to everyone who had written us in this last year. Combined with the responses that others in the coalition have received, it's a wide-ranging, enlightening, and heart-breaking perspective of the problem. It has lit a fire in our souls, reminding us of the urgency and importance of this campaign. A larger project is in the works, but in the meantime, we're sharing a few responses we received..

AUSP Thomson SMU Shut Down, Survivors Share Stories

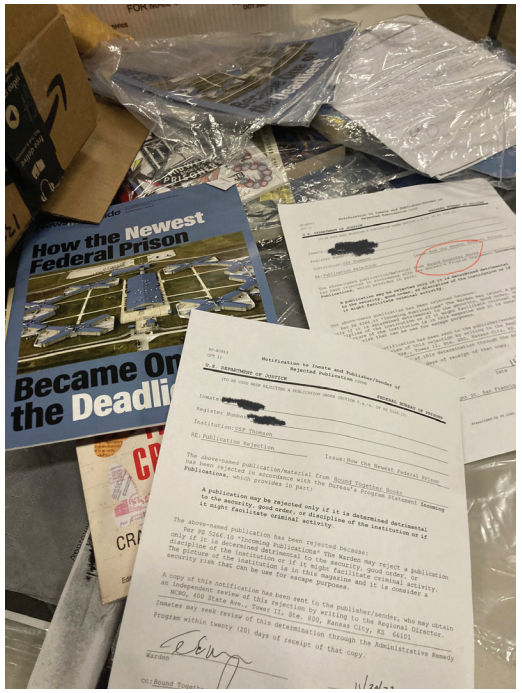
USP Thomson, the federal prison northwest of Chicago, has closed it's notorious "Special Management Unit" amidst multiple deaths and revelations of rampant torture and abuse. After the Marshall Project's expose "How the Newest Federal Prison Became One of the Deadliest", members of Congress announced investigations: despite IL Senator Dick Durbin's visit to shake hands with the warden while calling it "a reasonable situation", the Bureau of Prisons abruptly closed the SMU and transferred hundreds of people to other SHUs and USPs across the country. Although it transferred via miserable day-long fully restrained bus rides with no food, water or bathroom breaks, only to arrive at solitary confinement units at other maximum security prisons, we're hearing that everyone was super excited to get up out of there.

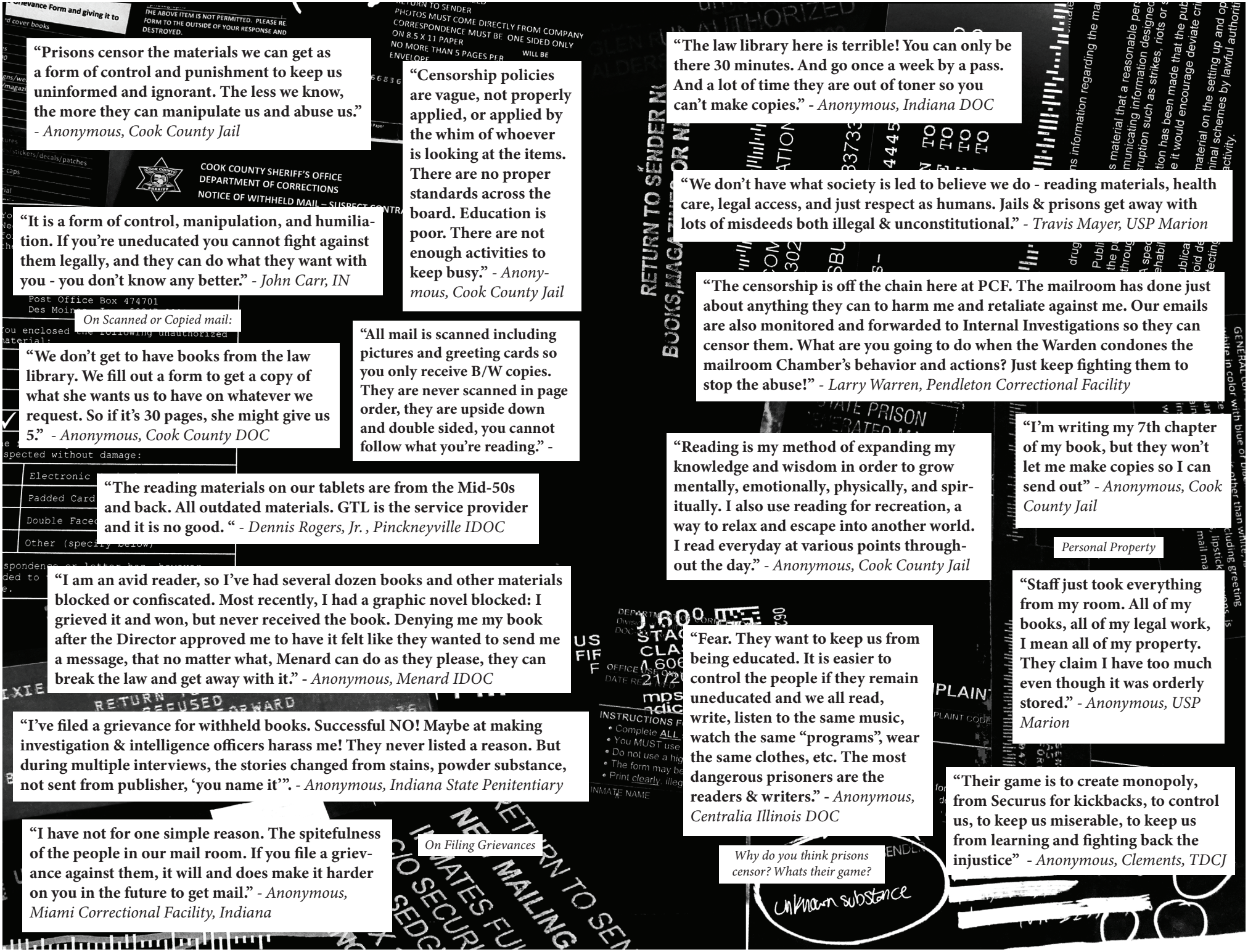
We have been corresponding with over 50 people, answering book requests and hearing about the horrific conditions. We focused on the lack of educational materials in a prison defined by double-celled solitary confinement for a minimum of two years (and most do much more due to program setbacks set up for failure). We were constantly told that we were the only way that they were able to get anything at all to read (especially books in Spanish). We tried sending everyone copies of The Marshall Project's investigation of the prison, but, unsuprisingly, they were all rejected (purportedly for pictures of the prison which they claim could facilitate escape). We're currently awaiting response to our appeals and a FOIA request demanding proof of their claims last year where mailroom guards faked fentanyl overdoses in blatant attempts to replace physical mail with privatized digitization services like SmartCommunications.

Remember: the BOP had high hopes for this new supermax joint purchased from Illinois for $165 million just four years ago. The efforts of those locked up there who never gave up who put pen to paper to get the truth out to journalists, lawyers, and activists, fighting together to successfully put enough pressure to shut it down. Remember Tamms? Letcher County? They CAN be beat!

"The act of confiscating the [Marshall Project magazine] without letting me read it was part of the punishment. I became distraught, depressed, and I started having anxiety attacks, which I am diagnosed with. No one should control anybody's literacy: this thing about controlling the people's reading is a serious injustice. And we must rise up!"

Anonymous USP Thomson survivor in censorship survey response




"Prisons censor the materials we can get as a form of control and punishment to keep us uninformed and ignorant. The less we know, the more they can manipulate us and abuse us." - *Anonymous, Cook County Jail*
"Censorship policies are vague, not properly applied, or applied by the whim of whoever is looking at the items. There are no proper standards across the board. Education is poor. There are not enough activities to keep busy." - *Anonymous, Cook County Jail*
"The law library here is terrible! You can only be there 30 minutes. And go once a week by a pass. And a lot of time they are out of toner so you can't make copies." - *Anonymous, Indiana DOC*
"We don't have what society is led to believe we do - reading materials, health care, legal access, and just respect as humans. Jails & prisons get away with lots of misdeeds both illegal & unconstitutional." - *Travis Mayer, USP Marion*
"It is a form of control, manipulation, and humiliation. If you're uneducated you cannot fight against them legally, and they can do what they want with you - you don't know any better." - *John Carr, IN*
On Scanned or Copied mail:
"All mail is scanned including pictures and greeting cards so you only receive B/W copies. They are never scanned in page order, they are upside down and double sided, you cannot follow what you're reading." -
"The censorship is off the chain here at PCF. The mailroom has done just about anything they can to harm me and retaliate against me. Our emails are also monitored and forwarded to Internal Investigations so they can censor them. What are you going to do when the Warden condones the mailroom Chamber's behavior and actions? Just keep fighting them to stop the abuse!" - *Larry Warren, Pendleton Correctional Facility*
"We don't get to have books from the law library. We fill out a form to get a copy of what she wants us to have on whatever we request. So if it's 30 pages, she might give us 5." - *Anonymous, Cook County DOC*
"I'm writing my 7th chapter of my book, but they won't let me make copies so I can send out" - *Anonymous, Cook County Jail*
"Reading is my method of expanding my knowledge and wisdom in order to grow mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. I also use reading for recreation, a way to relax and escape into another world. I read everyday at various points throughout the day." - *Anonymous, Cook County Jail*
"The reading materials on our tablets are from the Mid-50s and back. All outdated materials. GTL is the service provider and it is no good. " - *Dennis Rogers, Jr. , Pinckneyville IDOC*
Personal Property
"I am an avid reader, so I've had several dozen books and other materials blocked or confiscated. Most recently, I had a graphic novel blocked: I grieved it and won, but never received the book. Denying me my book after the Director approved me to have it felt like they wanted to send me a message, that no matter what, Menard can do as they please, they can break the law and get away with it." - *Anonymous, Menard IDOC*
"Staff just took everything from my room. All of my books, all of my legal work, I mean all of my property. They claim I have too much even though it was orderly stored." - *Anonymous, USP Marion*
"Fear. They want to keep us from being educated. It is easier to control the people if they remain uneducated and we all read, write, listen to the same music, watch the same "programs", wear the same clothes, etc. The most dangerous prisoners are the readers & writers." - *Anonymous, Centralia Illinois DOC*
"I've filed a grievance for withheld books. Successful NO! Maybe at making investigation & intelligence officers harass me! They never listed a reason. But during multiple interviews, the stories changed from stains, powder substance, not sent from publisher, 'you name it'". - *Anonymous, Indiana State Penitentiary*
"Their game is to create monopoly, from Securus for kickbacks, to control us, to keep us miserable, to keep us from learning and fighting back the injustice" - *Anonymous, Clements, TDCJ*
"I have not for one simple reason. The spitefulness of the people in our mail room. If you file a grievance against them, it will and does make it harder on you in the future to get mail." - *Anonymous, Miami Correctional Facility, Indiana*
On Filing Grievances
Why do you think prisons censor? Whats their game?
unknown substance

☐ Keys
☑ No pictures showing gang signs/weapons/money/
☐ Correspondence with other individuals detained at both Executive Director or the authorized designee
☐ The individual is no longer at this facility
☐ It contains obscenity, nudity, or sexually explicit ma
☐ It depicts or describes procedures for the constructio
☐ It depicts, encourages, or describes methods of escap
☐ It depicts or describes the procedures for the brewing
☐ It depicts, describes, advocates, or encourages violenc
☐ It encourages or instructs in the commission of crimina
☐ Screen shots of video visits
☐ It is otherwise detrimental to security, good order, reha

Vibe	Black Gold	Prohibited Publicat Swimsuit	
Stuff	FHM	Murder Dog	
Sex Life-Coco	Playboy	Playgirl	
Source	Game Informers		

Cook County Jail rejecting a Call of Duty book for "weapons". Game Informers are explicitly banned

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
MAIL RETURN SLIP
Menard Correctional Center

☐ Stickers; decals; fabric pieces; ribbon or yarn; magnets; beads; feathers; le hair; lipstick; white out; glue/paste; glitter; crayon; marker; highlighter; fluids; unusual stains; or any foreign or sticky substance that cannot be identi
☐ The item has been returned to the sender. No further action is required by
☐ Other N/A Marker on Book
All contents Returned

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS - DIXON CORRECTIONAL CENTER
NOTIFICATION OF UNAUTHORIZED MAIL

nvelopes, ting cards	___Cash, personal checks, cashier's checks, money order	___Music card
and signs,	___Unapproved correspondence from residents of other penal institutions, county jail or parolee	___Inappropri with inappropri
s, money.	___Posters, road maps, atlas, pictures over 8X10	___Any foreigr
	___Metal spiral/binding 2 Books	___Unauthoriz
highlighter, ers	___Contains stains of any kind, perfume, lipstick, oily substance, unusual stains, glitter	___Stickers or
s, personal	___Third party communications	___Communic residents other
etter or	___Other	

ED. PLEASE RESPOND WITHIN 30 DAYS BY SELECTING ONE OF THE OPTIONS E ESPONSE AND RETURN TO THE MAILROOM. IF NO RESPONSE IN 30 DAYS

Petty rejections for "unusual stains", "saturated", "crinkled", ad infinitum

tains paper found to be covered, saturated, or sprayed with any foreign substance. This includes perfume, e or other substance that permits any odor, discolors or shrinks the paper or makes the paper sticky, wet, or crinkled.

ADDITIONALS DETAILS:
PACKAGE CONTAINS 3X BOOKS
The mentioned confiscated parcels of mail were either saturated, stained, discolored, or emitting an odor.

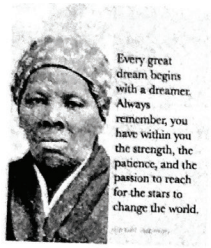
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
NOTIFICATION OF UNAUTHORIZED ITEMS
Pinckneyville Correctional Center

___ Homemade/Purchased cards/letters: objects not allowed include but are not limited to the following: glued or pasted; cloth; leather; ribbon or yarn; hair; feathers; flowers; seeds or beads; plastic-covered items; jewelry, glitter, crayon, marker/highlighter, glitter or metallic ink pens, 3D sponge squares, fuzzy material, colored paper and musical cards.	___ Mai or correcti both Ward custody or

11 BOOKS

Cook County Jail rejecting Rolling Stone magazine for "nudity".

☐ Corres prior approv
both Executive Director or the authorized designee and the Warden
☐ The individual is no longer at this facility
☑ It contains obscenity, nudity, or sexually explicit material ROLLING STONE
☐ It depicts or describes procedures for the construction or use of weapons, ammunition, bombs, or incendiary devices


Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.

Weekly Wrap-up
Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution
Warden Jon Noble
Deputy Warden Michael Gierach
April 30, 2021
Population: 1110

Strange Fact

Most elephants weigh less than the ton

A memo from the Warden begins with a Harriet Tubman quote and ends with a blanket ban on all books sent from us

Property Changes

Be advised, Go Viral Volume #6 is not allowed in accordance with DAI 309.00.50 Pornography – Nudity in Commercially Published Material. As of 4/7/21 the DAI Security Chief has reviewed the item and the material is now denied and has been placed on the DAI Denied Publication List which is posted in the library. Be advised this list is ever changing and all items received are subject to review.

New: Effective immediately, per the DAI Security Chief, we will not be accepting books from Midwest Books for Prisoners.

NOTICE AND REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN ON CORRESPONDENCE
State Form 11984 (R2 / 7-95)

State of Indiana
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

Name and Address of Sender	Name and Address of Address
Books to Prisoners	5B

Basic Wiring & Plumbing Book Banned from Indiana DOC

Statement of grounds to support this action (NOTE: If printer matter is being with or in part)

Prohibited item – 2 Books : Basic Wiring & Basic Plumbing not allowed per policy.

Name of staff person requesting action on correspondence	Title	Date *(month, day, year)*
T. Moreau	Clerical Assistant 2	02/14/2023

Check one	Name of reviewing authority	Title	Date *(month, day, year)*
X Approved ☐ Disapproved	P. Everly	Mailroom Supervisor	2/14/23

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF P

TO: (Sender - See Return Address)
MIDWEST BOOKS TO PRISONERS
1321 N MILWAUKEE AVENUE
CHICAGO, IL 60622

FROM: (Institution)
FCI-Memphis, Tennessee
1101 John A. Denie Rd.
Memphis, TN 38184

INMATE'S NAME:

REGISTER NUMBER:

Specific Material Returned:
(1)Book "Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning" rejected (Per SIS) (Unauthorized Per Policy) information that contains violent extremism type behavior, that is determined detrimental to the security, good order, or discipline of the institution or if it might facilitate criminal activity.

SIS at FCI Memphis ban the censorship zine and survey for "information that contains violent extremism type behavior"

(Printed or Typed Name and Written Signatur
D. Booker, CEO

RE: Midwest Books to Prisoners - Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning

Dear Midwest Books to Prisoners:

The Missouri Department of Corrections has reviewed material sent to Multiple Offenders who is currently confined in Potosi Correctional Center. We have determined the material identified on the enclosed censorship notification form is prohibited from being delivered within the institution for the reason(s) indicated on the form. If you desire, you may request an independent review of the determination by the Director of the Division of Adult Institutions. This request must
disagree with the determination. The request can
(30) calendar days following the date of the lette
be the final decision and will be made within 30

THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED UP

Zine and survey also mass rejected at Potosi MODOC: "can be used to instill violence or hatred". Jason Lewis similarly rejected our last Community Zine several times

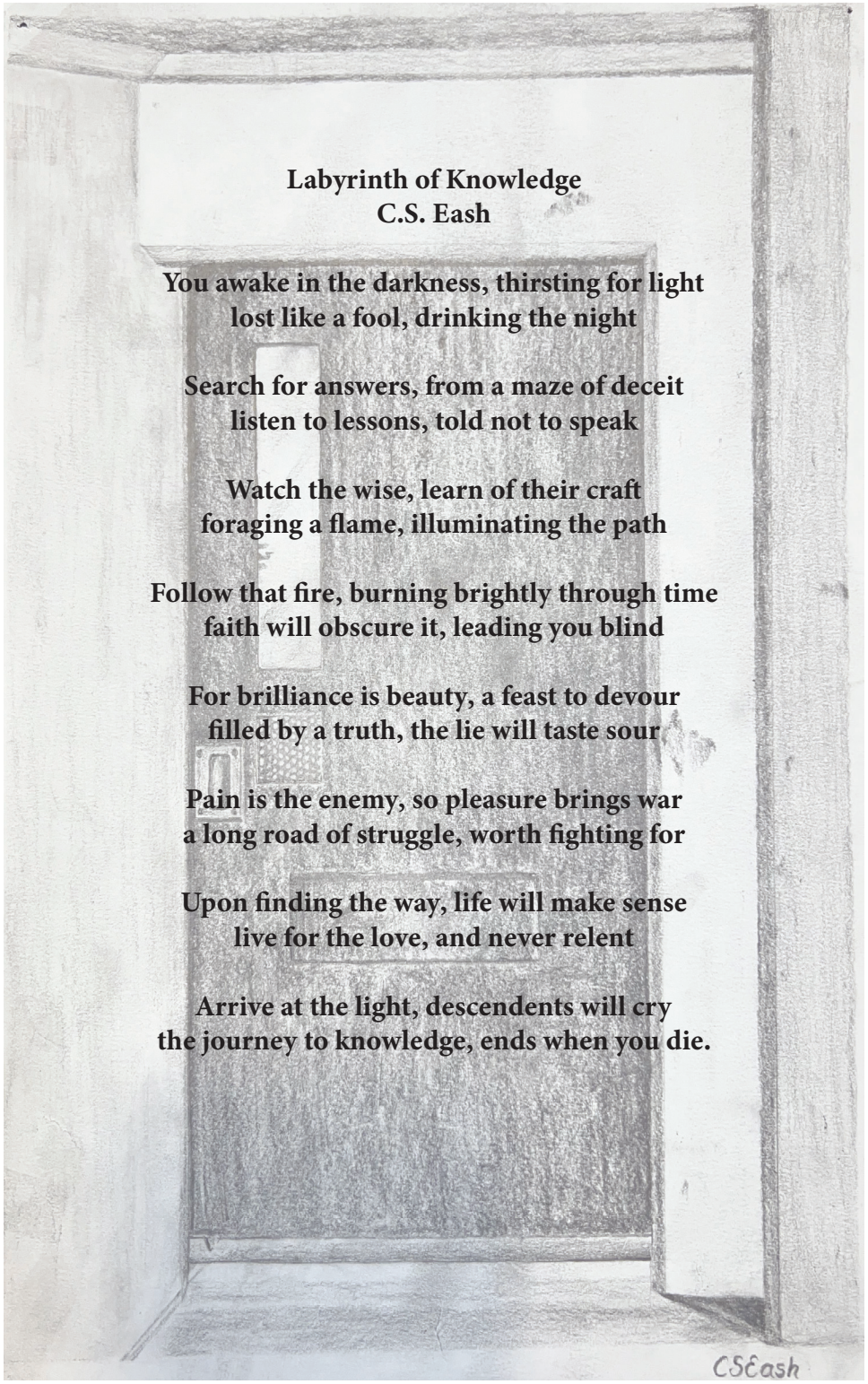
DAI Director
Department of Corrections
2729 Plaza Drive
PO Box 236
Jefferson City, MO 65102
FAX Number: (573) 526-4254

contains information which can be used to instill violence or hatred among the offender population

Sincerely,

Jason Lewis
Deputy Division Director
Division of Adult Institutions

SERIES/ VOLUME NUMBER
Campaign Against Prison Censorship and Book Banning
DATE
March 23, 2023



Labyrinth of Knowledge
C.S. Eash

You awake in the darkness, thirsting for light
lost like a fool, drinking the night

Search for answers, from a maze of deceit
listen to lessons, told not to speak

Watch the wise, learn of their craft
foraging a flame, illuminating the path

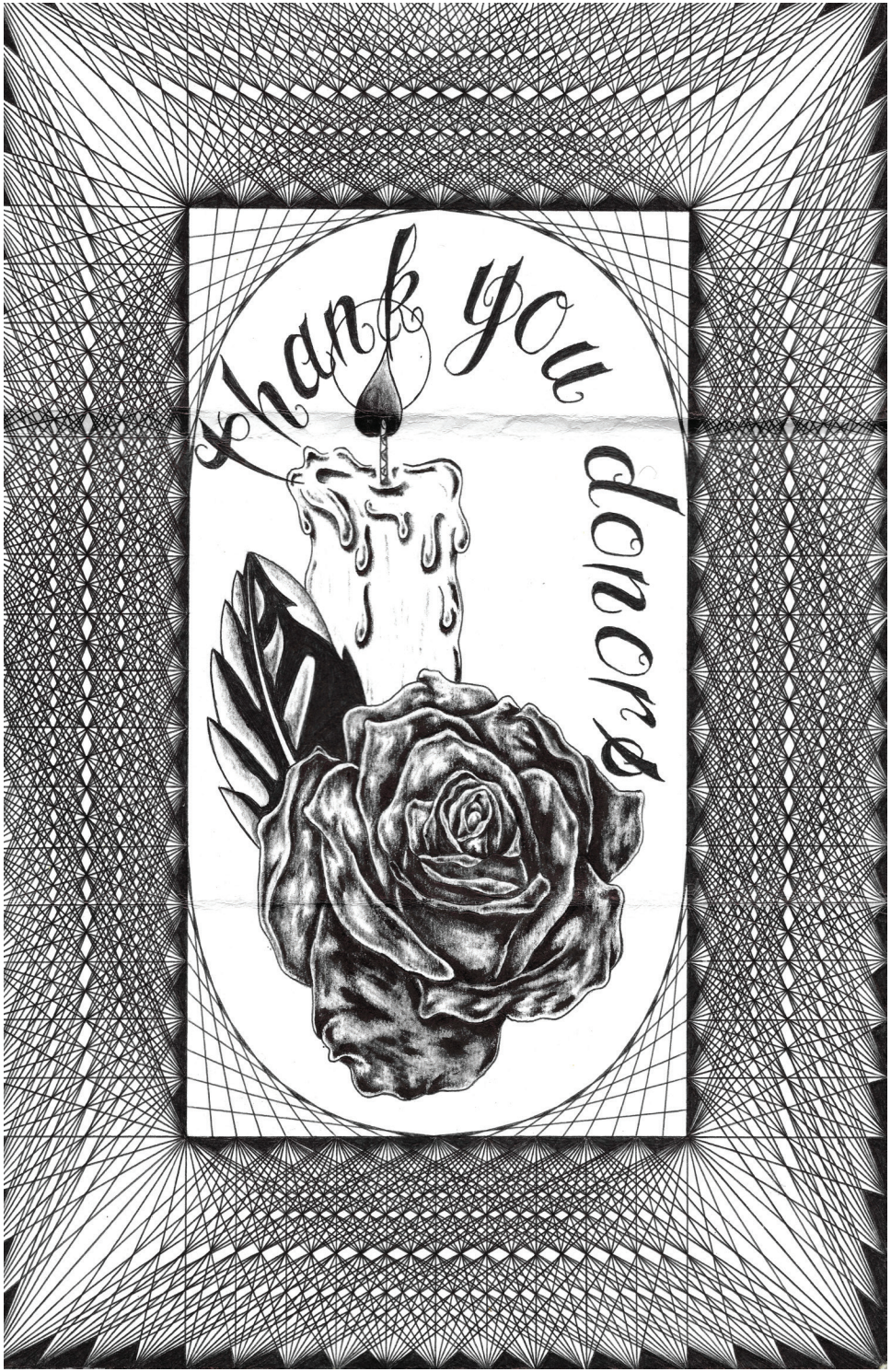
Follow that fire, burning brightly through time
faith will obscure it, leading you blind

For brilliance is beauty, a feast to devour
filled by a truth, the lie will taste sour

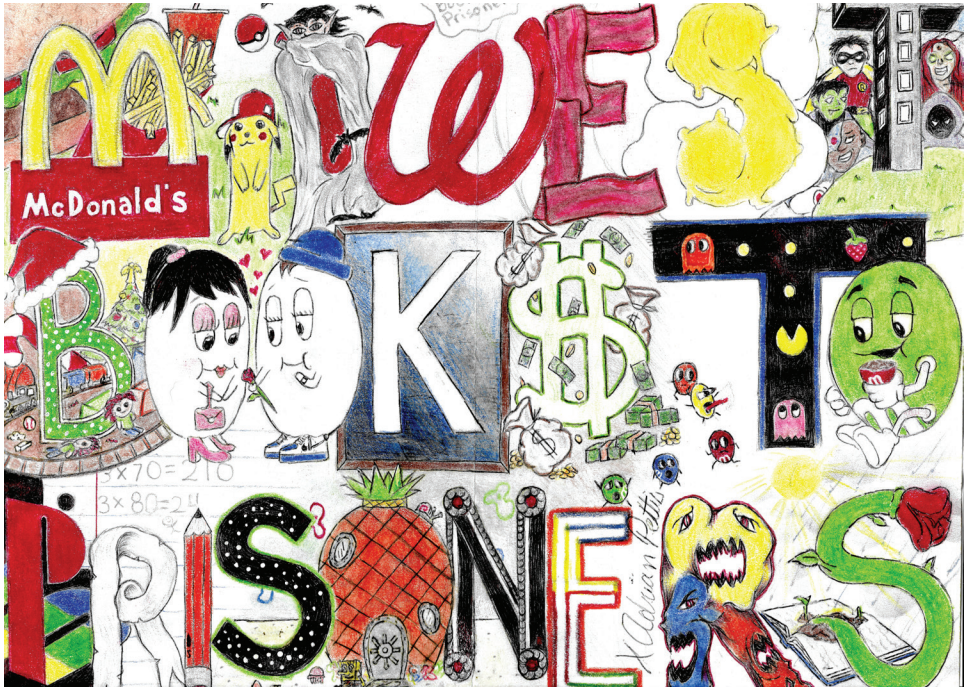
Pain is the enemy, so pleasure brings war
a long road of struggle, worth fighting for

Upon finding the way, life will make sense
live for the love, and never relent

Arrive at the light, descendents will cry
the journey to knowledge, ends when you die.

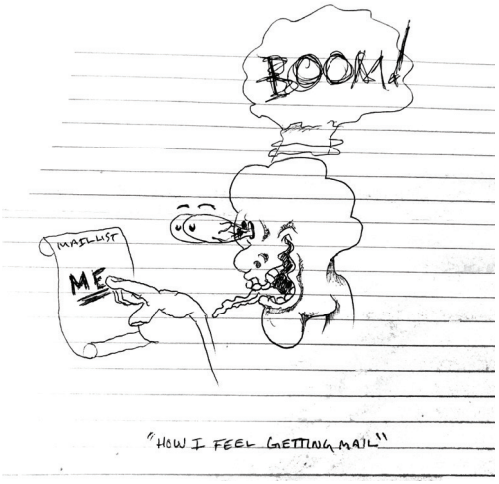


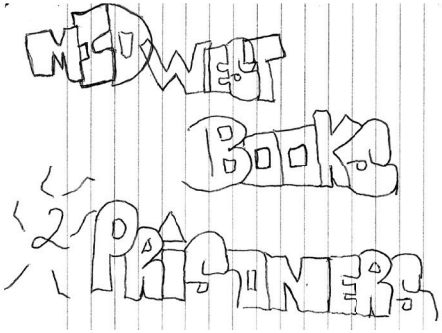
Jeremy W. Winsor

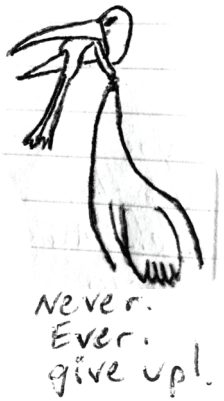


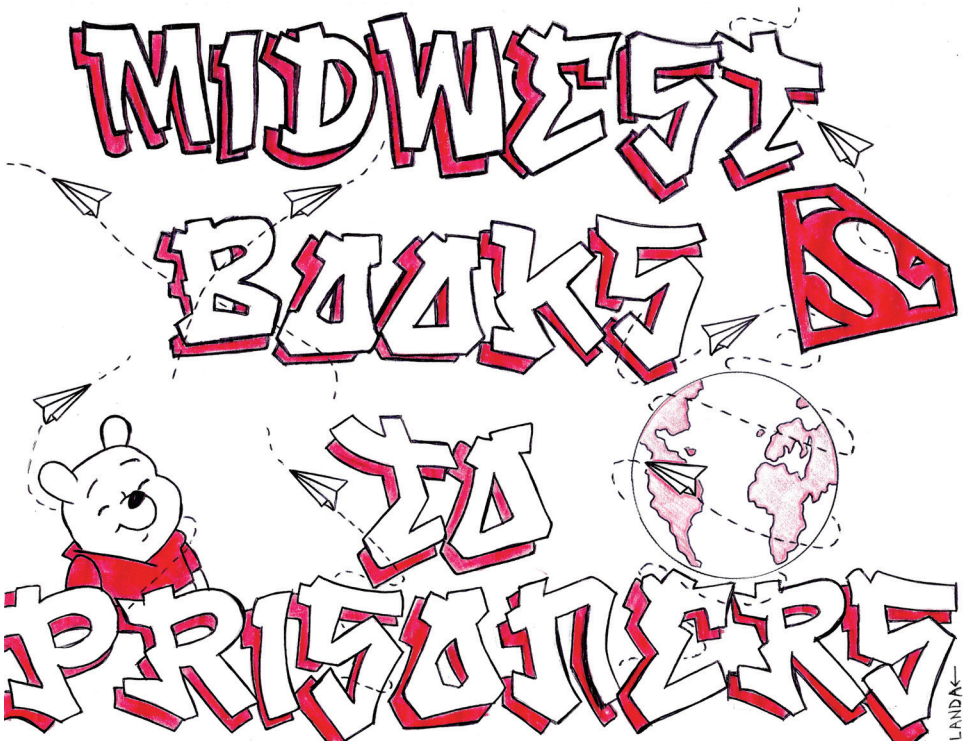
Adrian Pettis

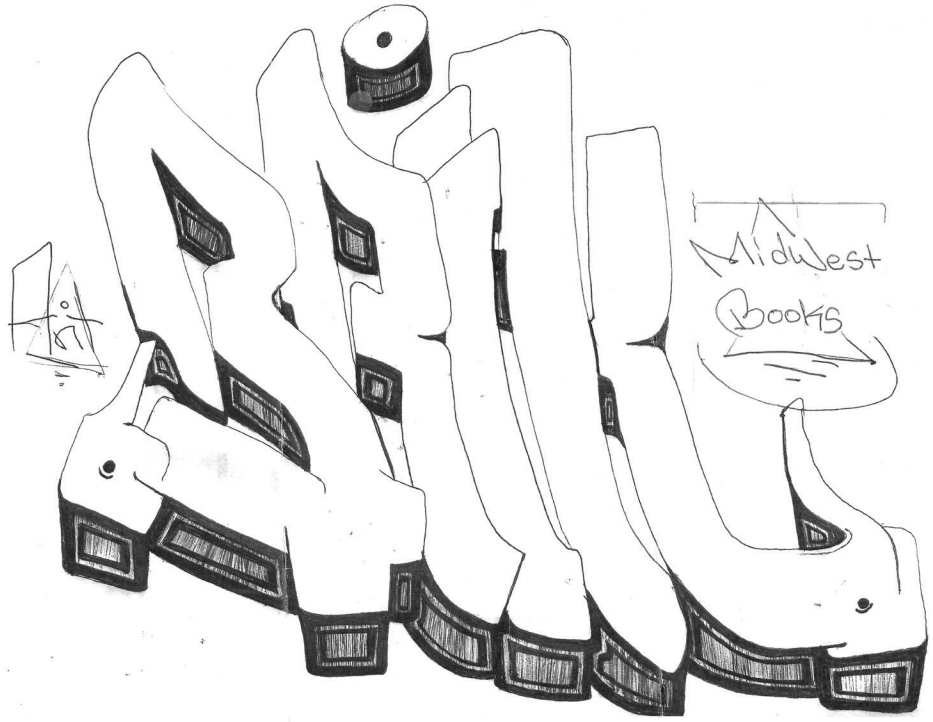
Dwight Quigley



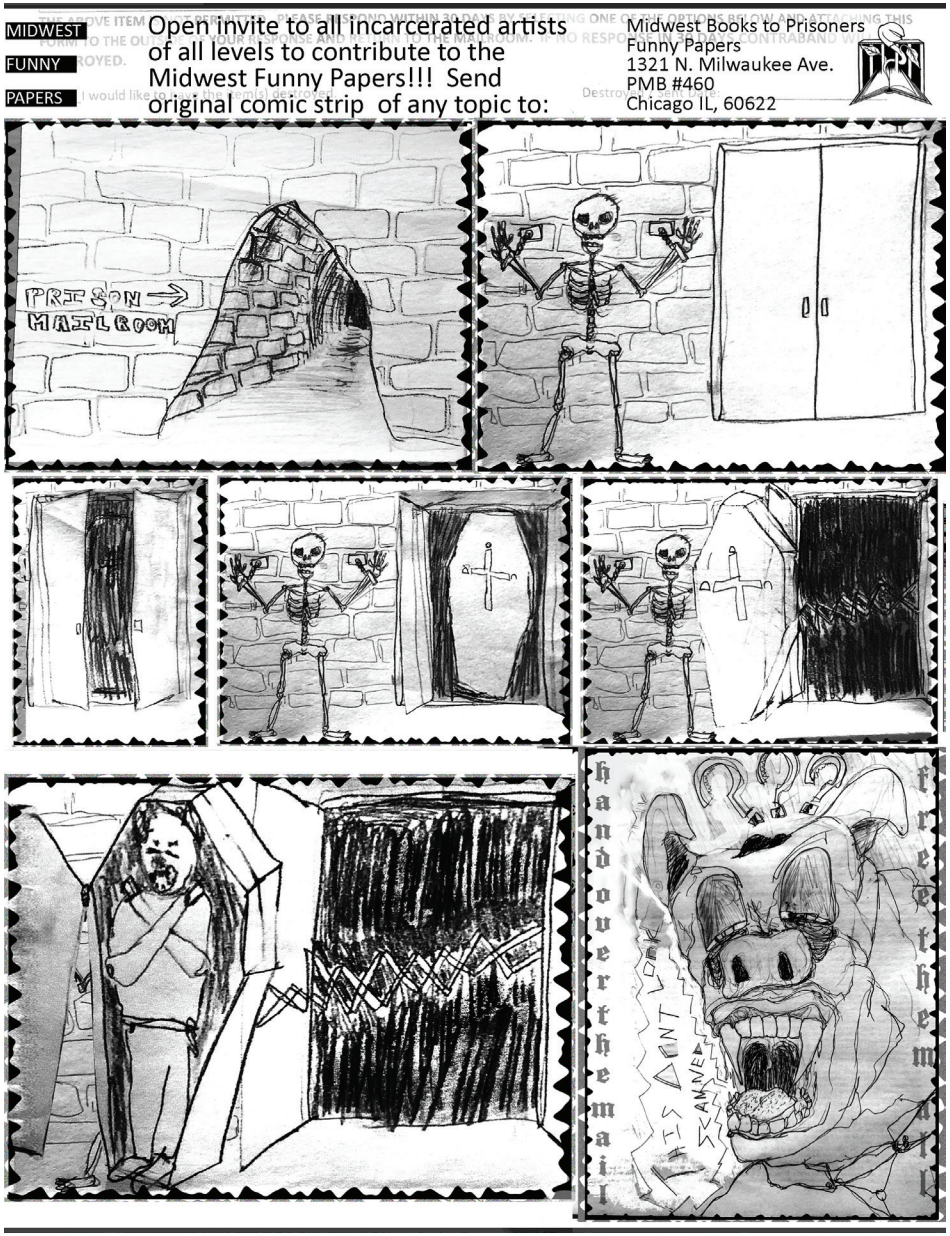








Clockwise from top left: Jeremy Mount, Jacob Gaines, Ahmeed Fowler, Michael Owlfeather-Gorbey, Zack Park, Levar Williams, Daniel Baker. Across top: Jose Landa. Bottom: Rodrigo Ramirez


MIDWEST FUNNY PAPERS
Open invite to all incarcerated artists of all levels to contribute to the Midwest Funny Papers!!! Send original comic strip of any topic to:
Midwest Books to Prisoners
Funny Papers
1321 N. Milwaukee Ave.
PMB #460
Chicago IL, 60622
PRISON MAIL ROOM
hand over the mail
LIEUTENANT LOAFER
OFFICER TRIVIAL
release them all

The Ongoing Misadventures of Lieutenant Loafer and Officer Trivial

An invitation to contribute to an experimental writing project: add to ongoing story involving two "fictional" characters "Lieutenant Loafer" and "Officer Trivial" (any resemblance is purely coincidental), who embody the maliciousness, the negligence, the pettiness, or whatever other sick stuff be going through these screws heads - but keep it comedy! Share your stories dealing with the BS of the system - but in the form of short fiction, art, poetry, or comic strip.

Excerpt "Finest Hour" by Wayne Bell, freewaynebell.com

As the Judge was reading off the law, Marshall could see where this was going, so she said "Your Honor, if it may please the Court, I would like to go on record and say that I'm going to file a motion asking the Court to hold my client Mr. Hunter's case in abeyance until we see what they're doing to do with United States v. Taylor pending right now. The Supreme Court is being asked a very important question,"

"Which is?" the Judge asked.

Marshall Ringwald shuffled around a couple papers like she was looking for something, but she already knew what she was about to say. "Ahh- here we go. The Supreme Court is wondering whether 18 U.S.C. 924(c)(3)(A)'s definition of a Crime of Violence excludes attempted Hobbes Act robberies in violation of 18 U.S.C. 1951(a). "

The Judge, after considering what she had just said, granted her wish. "Okay, Ms. Ringwald, I'm going to allow you to file your motion."

The D.A. Mr. Blackburn had been sitting over there all quietly enjoying himself because Marshall's Compassionate Release motion had somehow been sabotaged. But now, the Judge was granting her permission to file a motion of abeyance for her client this late in the game.

Mr. Blackburn jumped out his seat like someone had just threw a pot of hot water on him. "Objection, your Honor! Come on, what, she's looking into a crystal ball or something? What, is there going to be a magical case about to take place here? I believe she's trying to thwart the Court here, Sir -"

The Judge stopped Mr. Blackburn in mid-sentence and said "Yes, Mr. Blackburn, I'm going to allow Ms. Ringwald to file her motion because it's true that the United States v. Taylor case is very fluent throughout the system right now. So as I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted… Let the record reflect that Ms. Ringwald has motioned the court to file a motion of abeyance for a later review pending the Taylor outcome. So duly noted, and with that," banging the gavel, "this court is adjourned!"

All I know is that: if Mr. Blackburn was a cartoon character he would have been the star. The D.A. Mr. Blackburn is over there at the prosecutor's desk about to pulling the last few strands of hair out of his head with those horned frog glasses on. They were so thick he could probably see on the planet Mars. That's why Marshall couldn't understand why he couldn't see this coming. This is her playing field: she don't lose here, and Mr. Blackburn should know that by now.

Marshall knows that he's tired of getting beat and whipped by a girl, but this isn't just any girl. It's Marshall Ringwald of all people. Mr. Blackburn, after having second thoughts about being beaten by a girl, had to hand it to her. She was tough and very poised under pressure. So he didn't feel too bad, because, one thing for sure and two things for certain, Marshall Ringwald would give any D.A. or top dog lawyer around the country the blues.

by Daniel Baker

Ivana Hoffman - 1995-2014, from Germany, where she protested against Nazis at 14, joined a revolutionary group "Young Struggle" at 16, and was part of hunger strikes and organized events and rallies.

At 19 she went to Rojava to join the women's revolution in the fight against ISIS. She fought in battles continuously for 6 months. The night of March 7-8th, International Women's Day, ISIS attacked the village of Tel Tamer, where Ivana was based with other YPG revolutionaries. She killed dozens of ISIS mercenaries before she ran out of ammo and was shot and killed.

Ivana was the first internationalist woman to die in the Rojava revolution. She was a proud defiant lesbian revolutionary, and she did not hesitate to join the fight. We should learn from her. Shahid Namrin! The Martyrs never die!

Menticidal Thoughts

By Andre Winters

From prison traumatic solitary dis-ease in which separates the mind from thou body as if my soul never really existed. A walking corpse of a strained fitness for conversation without substance is meaningless and a head without the brain is thoughtless while arms without reach remain pointless; therefore a body without its soul is hollow. So if this is not common sensed then you're senseless to the abyss of doing "life" upon a sin-tense called menticide in which ones thinking is dead while the body alive. It's like waiting to live only to die but in their mind it's called doing time. So if thoughts are useless then what does time mean? Or can this even seem or pictured as the wildest of thine?? Sincerely yours, the rose that bloom from a penitentiary of gloom.

Smoke and Fire

Written In Support of the Heroic Cop City Rebels
By Sean Swain

The world stares in paralyzed bewilderment
unable to discern the meaning of a powerful message
written in the medium of smoke and fire…
no one can seem to grasp it
such messages written in smoke and fire
so often etched upon the bodies and lives
of the powerless
composed by police and soldiers
presidents and corporate executives…
this language of smoke and fire seems foreign
when uttered by the rabble, the forgotten,
the invisible,
those struggling to be free.

What a strange occurrence
this language of power so eloquently sung
by the powerless.

Those in power burned the past
put blazing torches to the world of the First Peoples
to drive them to their doom
Those in power burn the future
doused in gasoline

But today, the world watches, unblinking,
our faces painted orange by the beautiful conflagration
staring back from the screens,
and we witness an idol of the powerful turned to ashes
We see the death machine,
so confident and glorious just yesterday,
smolder as it begins to grind to a sad, belching, blackened halt.

Not all of us are deaf to the rebel warriors' declarations
We hear their song of smoke and fire
as clearly as those in power can hear it
and while the powerful cry tears of rage and indignation,
the rabble, the forgotten, the invisible,
those struggling to be free–
we cry tears of joy
in knowing that a new world has arrived.

Fate says to our rebel warrior,
"A great and deadly firestorm is coming."
Our rebel warrior says to Fate,
"I AM the firestorm."
Children, elders, loved ones,
everyone struggling to be free,
I urge you, I implore you,
I beg you– be the firestorm.
Be the firestorm.

Ascend Me

By Rachael Christina Hilyard

Things don't really matter anymore.
They weigh on a Planck scale
Spinning patterns in webs
In this space/time vortex called life
Manifesting our own strife.
I've sucked myself down into the abyss
No accommodations made here
Acclimate yourself
While the accordion of life
Plays on
Activate my brain back up
It's been down for a while
These people are on repeat, these people are on repeat
Their brains are like commodes
I'm convinced, I'm in suspense
What will they flush next down the hole
Flush that shit just like a dead pet fish
Mindfulness
Just falls straight through like a black hole
She strives to change
She reaches for the ring
She studies loop theory
Sliding down the pole
Of her memory
Humor me, lie to me, tell me your eyes are opening
Tell me you really see
Tell me I can be what I want to be
Tell me I will manifest my dreams
It'll be easier than it seems and
It is really happening
Maybe just maybe it really
Really is happening
Is this the sense
She's been trying to make?
Inch by excruciating inch
She ascends

Have You

By Buddy Smith

Have you ever seen your momma cry?
Have your ever seen your momma with
A black eye, take a beating from a
Real bad guy?
Have you?
I have!!
Have you ever seen your momma struggle
To stay on her feet?
Have you ever seen your momma go hungry
So you can eat?
Have you?
I have!!
Have you ever seen your momma take
A razor to her wrist not wanting to survive,
Hating God she was alive?
Have you?
I have!
Have you always loved your momma?
Have you?
I have!!

Worthy Tears
By De'jon Yearling

I have not given up
As time goes by
It seems others haven't too,
Letter by letter
Book by book
Sending money to my account,
I shed a tear.
I thought I was forgotten,
I read the letters,
I love the books.
It's money well spent.
I expect more and I'm given less
I can't say I'm not blessed
People give me their best
I struggle with being grateful
I struggle with patience
I struggle with love,
I'm stuck in a hard place
But I keep saying I'm tough.
I fight my tears
When I should let them flow.
Are they worthy?
I guess we will never know.
Being tough does not mean holding things in.
True strength is knowledge and letting things flow
Be strong and let your tears go
I'm closed in with so much fear
I lied to myself, my worthy tears

Free Me
by Raheem Rahman

Locked down, held down, pain now
Heart about to bust.
Love lost, heart constrained.
Foundation crumbled to dust.
Minutes gone, time wasted
Still the situation is the same.
Money's tight, things aren't right
Guess who gets the blame.
Mouths to feed, people in need
Nobody to pick up the slack.
Losing all hope, sense of direction
Brains about to crack.
Can't catch a break, no matter what's at stake
Still end up losing ground.
Can't find an out, no matter the route
It all ends up going down.
Irregardless of the cost, I'm tired of the lost
Need something to set me free.
Hand me a map, place a key on my lap
Dear God, please release me.
From life struggles, heartaches
Prison and pain.
From pandemic, poverty, ignorance
And the mentally insane.

Check out Raheem Rahman's new book
"The Caged Guerrilla" and his podcasts!

CONTRIBUTORS

Shoutout to all who sent us their works and made this zine possible! Please show them some love - reach out, write a letter, send some money, and share with others how their contributions moved you!

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Tree down
WE DO THIS
'TIL WE FREE
US